NOVA SCOTIA
Community Services

DEPARTMENT OF COMMUNITY SERVICES

Disability Support Program

Direct Family Support

Enhanced Family Support for Children Policy

Effective: December 2012

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1.0 POLICY STATEMENT

1.1 A child and their family who is eligible for supports provided through the Direct Family Support for Children (DFSC) program and whose funding needs exceed the maximum available through DFSC may be eligible for funding under Enhanced Family Support for Children (EFSC).

1.2 Funding may be authorized and paid in an amount up to the current allowable limits established by the Department of Community Services (DCS), as outlined in the DFS/EFS Funding Rate Guidelines (Appendix A). EFSC funding will be subject to available resources and the DFSC Income Guidelines.

2.0 PURPOSE

2.1 EFSC provides funding to assist families to support their child at home when their child's care and support needs are considered extremely challenging and they require comprehensive, highly structured and skilled forms of support and intervention. This funding will allow families to hire support workers who have specialized training, education or experience related to the needs of the child.

2.2 EFSC does not provide funding for fulltime 24/7 in-home support, or to compensate caregivers for supporting their child with a disability, or to replace public school or early intervention programs.

3.0 DEFINITIONS

3.1 **DFSC Income Guidelines**
Considers a family's size and annual net income to determine financial eligibility and features a sliding scale for monthly family contributions.

3.2 For additional EFSC policy definitions refer to the DSP Glossary of Terms.

4.0 ELIGIBILITY CRITERIA

4.1 To be eligible for EFSC funding, a child and their family must meet all of the requirements of the Disability Support Program (DSP)/DFSC Program.

4.2 In addition to the DSP/DFSC Program requirements, a child must:

a) have extremely challenging care and support needs that are not adequately addressed through their current DFSC funding;

b) have care and support needs that are assessed at, or exceed, an overall range of 3 or 4, as determined by the Support Assessment Tool (SAT);

c) require the involvement of healthcare practitioners from two or more disciplines; and

d) require one or more of the following:

i. highly structured behavioural approaches and interventions due to their predictable or unpredictable behaviours which pose a significant level of risk to themselves or others. These behaviours may include but are not limited to physical aggression or property damage;

ii. highly skilled behavioural support techniques, monitoring, and intervention by their family or a skilled caregiver(s) due to their behaviours which impact their ability to independently carry out their own personal care; or

iii. skilled techniques, monitoring, and observation by their family or a skilled caregiver(s) due to their significant physical and personal care needs.

4.3 In addition to meeting the requirements of sections 4.1 and 4.2, one or more of the following family circumstances must be in evidence:

a) the family, including siblings, is experiencing significant or total disruption of family life and caregiver work/life routine;

b) the child's primary caregiver is unable to engage in employment or is missing time from work and may be facing potential loss of employment due to their caregiving responsibilities;

c) the family's daily obligations and caregiving responsibilities are significant because of insufficient family and community support networks;

d) the family is experiencing significant challenges in accessing resources in their community and this has a significant impact on their ability to carry out their child's care; and

e) the family is unable to hire and maintain the skilled staff necessary to support their child's specialized care and support needs.

5.0 INELIGIBILITY

5.1 A child and their family are ineligible for EFSC if they do not meet all the eligibility criteria outlined in section 4.0.

6.0 ENHANCED FAMILY SUPPORT FUNDING PROPOSAL

6.1 Eligibility for EFSC may be identified during the family's initial application and assessment for DFSC, or during reassessments of their ongoing eligibility.

6.2 If EFSA funding is not available in the fiscal year in which the participant and their family request funding, the participant's name shall be placed on the EFS wait list for funding, upon their family's request.

6.3 If EFSC funding is requested, an EFS Funding Proposal form will be sent to the child's family for completion. This form will provide details regarding their child's behavioural and enhanced care and support needs and an overview of their family's circumstances.

6.4 The family must complete the EFS Funding Proposal form and provide any additional documentation such as, but not limited to, a psycho-educational assessment or reports from a healthcare practitioner, as requested by the Care Coordinator. The Care Coordinator may assist families in completing the EFS Funding Proposal form.

6.5 Once the EFS Funding Proposal form is completed and returned to the Care Coordinator, a follow-up appointment will be scheduled for the Care Coordinator to review the documentation with the family and provide information on EFSC.

7.0 DETERMINING ELIGIBILITY

7.1 The Care Coordinator will review the EFS Funding Proposal and the additional documentation submitted to ensure all pertinent information and documentation have been received.

7.2 The Care Coordinator will consult with the Casework Supervisor to review the EFS Funding Proposal and supporting documents.

7.3 The Casework Supervisor will review all information and documentation, and forward their recommendation and all supporting documents to the District Manager and the DSP Specialist.

7.4 The District Manager, in consultation with the DSP Specialist, will review all documents and the eligibility recommendation and may approve EFSC funding.

8.0 FUNDING REVIEW AND REASSESSMENT

8.1 The first review of a child's EFS Funding Proposal and family circumstances shall be conducted by the Care Coordinator within three (3) months of the family receiving EFSC funding. Subsequent reviews shall be conducted semi-annually or as the child's care and support needs or the family's circumstances change. Reviews must be completed using the EFS Funding Review form.

8.2 If an adjustment in funding is requested, a full reassessment and updated EFS Funding Proposal may be required.

8.3 A full reassessment and updated EFS Funding Proposal shall be completed when:

a) the child's care and support needs have significantly changed,

b) the child's family experiences significant changes in their circumstances which impact their ability to support their child.

8.4 Reviews and reassessments shall be completed by the Care Coordinator in consultation with the child and their family.

9.0 APPLICATION

9.1 This policy applies to participants and their family and all DSP staff.

10.0 ACCOUNTABILITY

10.1 The Director is responsible for ensuring that the program achieves the objectives for which it was created, and is delivered within a fiscally sustainable manner.

10.2 Regional Administrators are responsible for putting this policy in place and ensuring compliance within their respective areas of responsibility, and the resources made available.

10.3 Managers and supervisors are responsible for complying with the policy within their respective areas of responsibility and adequately preparing their employees to carry out their respective functions.

11.0 MONITORING

11.1 The Director is responsible for implementing appropriate mechanisms to ensure monitoring and compliance with this policy.

11.2 Regional Administrators are responsible for regularly monitoring and reporting on compliance with this policy.

APPENDIX A – DFS/EFS Funding Rate Guidelines

Funding may be authorized and paid in an amount up to the current allowable limits established by the Department of Community Services (DCS), as outlined below.

SUPPORTS REQUESTED	RATES
• **DFS Respite and Exceptional Circumstances (up to a combined total of $2,200/month)** • **EFS (up to an additional $1,600/month)** • **The combined total of Respite, Exceptional Circumstances and EFS funding must not exceed $3,800/month**	
Monthly respite (short breaks – including short weekend breaks) as per SAT and ISP	up to $800/month
Before and/or after school/workshop - Children over 12 and adults	up to $1,750/month
Before and/or after school child care subsidy - Children 12 and under When additional specialized/skilled care and support is required that is directly related to the child's disability (e.g., extensive personal care or intensive behavioural support and programming). Parents are responsible for basic child care for children 12 and under.	up to $390/month
Day activities (DFSA only) For participants who cannot access traditional day programs due to their extensive personal care or intensive behavioral support and programming needs. Can use any combination of five (5) days in a given week.	up to $2,350/month
Evening support - Children over 12 and adults (related to parents' work schedule)	up to $1,750/month
Evenings support child care subsidy - Children 12 and under (related to parents' work schedule) When additional specialized/skilled care and support is required that is directly related to the child's disability (e.g., extensive personal care or intensive behavioural support and programming). Parents are responsible for basic child care for children 12 and under.	up to $390/month
Overnight weekday support Intermittent breaks provided to parents when their child or adult family member is experiencing prolonged nighttime sleep disturbances.	up to $1,400/month

Daytime weekend child care subsidy - Children 12 and under (related to parents work schedule) When additional specialized/skilled care and support is required that is directly related to the child's disability (e.g., extensive personal care or intensive behavioural support and programming). Parents are responsible for basic child care for children 12 and under.	up to $65/month
Daytime weekend support - Children over 12 and adults (related to parents work schedule)	up to $250/month
Overnight weekend care and support for children 12 and under	up to $800/month
Overnight weekend care and support for children over 12 and Adults(*) ***Exception for adult participants**: Funding requests for the provision of short-term respite, at-home or in a non-licensed home may be considered when respite in a licensed home (as per DSP Program policy section 12.0) is not available or is not a viable option.	up to $800/month
Vacation – up to 2 weeks/year	up to $1000/per calendar year
Other requested support Consultation shall be held with the DSP Specialist for items under "Other requested support". Associated cost(s) must not exceed the current allowable EFS Funding limits.	As determined